Remarks

Claims 81-100 are pending and rejected. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection and request allowance of claims 81-100.

Claims 81-100 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent 6,324,279 (Kalmanek). Claim 81 requires a signaling processor that is configured to process signaling to select a connection, a bandwidth rate, and an encoding scheme. The recent Office Actions asserts that gate controller 110 and associated database 140 read on the claimed signaling processor. This assertion is clearly incorrect.

With respect to selecting the connection, Kalmanek teaches that the TIU selects the connection (DATAADDR), and identifies the selected connection in the set-up message that it sends to the gate controller (See Kalmanek, column 21, line 1 to column 22, line 31). The gate controller authorizes the call and can deny the call request, but the gate controller clearly does not select the connection as required by claim 81.

With respect the encoding scheme, Kalmanek teaches that the TIU selects the encoding scheme (CODING), and identifies the selected encoding scheme in the set-up message that it sends to the gate controller (See Kalmanek, column 21, line 1 to column 22, line 31). The gate controller authorizes the call and can deny the call request the gate controller has, but the gate controller clearly does not select the encoding scheme required by claim 81.

Claim 81 requires an interworking unit to handle user communications. The recent Office Action asserts that Kalmanek teaches the claimed interworking unit, and cites "step 260 in Fig. 2" in support. Step 260 describes the exchange of signaling between TIUs prior to a connection between the caller and the called party (step 270). Step 260 does not teach any unit that handles user communications because these do not begin until there is a connection.

Claim 81 requires an interworking unit that is configured to receive a message from the signaling processor indicating a selected bandwidth rate. The messages sent from the gate controller to the TIU do not specify a bandwidth rate. (See Kalmanek, column 21, line 1 to column 27, line 42). The gate controller specifies a maximum bandwidth to the edge router, but the edge router is not the TIU (interworking unit). Thus, Kalmanek does not teach the claimed message between the signaling processor and the interworking unit.

Claim 81 requires a signaling processor that is configured to transfer a message indicating the billing rate to an accounting system. The gate controller sends a billing message to the edge router, but the edge router is not an accounting system. (See Kalmanek, column 33, line 55 to column 34, line 9). The edge router sends billing information to the accounting system. (See Kalmanek, column 5, lines 9-28).

Clearly, Kalmanek requires extremely intelligent TIUs (interworking units) to select connections, bandwidth rates, and coding schemes. This adds to the cost and complexity of the TIUs that must be present at each user site. Advantageously, the claimed invention greatly simplifies the interworking unit of Kalmanek by placing intelligence in the signaling processor.

With respect to the dependent claims, the recent Office Action makes several incorrect assertions.

Claim 82 requires that the signaling processor process an SS7 message to make the selections. The recent Office Action cites column 7, line 61 in support, but that part of Kalmanek refers to a telephone gateway 130 that converts between SS7 signaling and the new signaling protocol described in Kalmanek that is processed by the gate controller. Thus, the telephone gateway 130 ensures that gate controller 110 gets the new signaling and never receives SS7 signaling.

Claims 83-84 require a signaling processor that is configured to select the bandwidth rate based on a caller number or whether the call is a voice call or a data call. The recent Office action cites Kalmanek column 9, lines 11-21 in support. The cited section does include the word "voice", but does not teach how the bandwidth rate is selected.

Claim 85 requires a signaling processor that is configured to select the encoding scheme based on a caller number. The recent Office action cites Kalmanek column 23, lines 28-32 in support. The cited section is not relevant to how the encoding scheme is selected.

Applicants submit that there are numerous additional reasons in support of patentability, but that such reasons are moot in light of the above remarks and are omitted in the interests of brevity. Applicants respectfully request allowance of claims 81-100.

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